Indiana
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
COUNCIL
140 N. Senate Ave
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Coordination of Indiana GIS through dissemination of data and data products, education and outreach, adoption of standards, building partnerships and the IndianaMap.

A NEW WAY OF DOING BUSINESS

Challenge

In June 2006, Honda officially announced Decatur County would be the home of a new plant, scheduled to open in 2008. The plant will cover 1 million square feet; sit on a 1,700 acre tract; and employ 2,000 people. Combined with an accelerated construction schedule (existing homes on the site were being moved less than 3 months after the official announcement), the County faced the immense challenge of responding to numerous information requests in a short period of time. There were parcel research requests for utility easements, widening of roads, property surveys, zoning, etc. On many days, County offices had people in line from open to close.

Action

Decatur County had integrated much of their data into a geographic information system (GIS). By Spring 2006, many departments were on board: the Auditor's Office, Assessor's Office, Highway Department, Area Planning, e911, Clerk's Office and Recorder's Office. Each was using the GIS data as part of their normal daily functions.
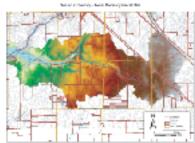
In addition to fielding requests through the coordinated onsite system, the County's GIS website was released to the public. It proved to be a solid way of transferring information to constituents, as it allowed the public to obtain information from the GIS without any formal training.

"For any issue that arises, our first step is to review the location in the GIS, and we are usually able to resolve it instantly."

- David Neuman
Area Planning Director

Results

The County's investment in GIS paid off in massive time savings. Mary Dickman, County Auditor's Office, says "…property information requests that used to take a couple of weeks are now answered in a matter of minutes."

In addition to facilitating information retrieval, the County's GIS provided a morale boost. Tim Ortman, Decatur County GIS Coordinator, noted that "…unlike any other project, the GIS pulled the County together as a unit." Departments that used to operate as individual islands now integrate their information and share data, which creates a general respect between the offices, and allows the County to supply information to the public faster and more accurately than ever before.